**Lesson Plan #1—A Symbolic Journey of Canada**

Throughout this lesson, students will develop a symbolic understanding of Canada, as outlined under **indicator e)** in “Grade 5 Social Studies Outcomes and Indicators”. Students will be given the opportunity to communicate any thoughts they have about Canada, and give reasons as to *why* they love their country (or why they do not like their country). I will investigate students’ prior knowledge, by asking them to develop a list of Canadian symbols. I will write this list on the board. Next, I will ask student teams to locate and retrieve eight of these Canadian symbols in an open environment (the school playground and field would be opportune areas for students to explore). Students will engage in inquiry by using a variety of reliable resources to research the symbol that they found. After students have had enough time to conduct research and share information, I will ask students to reflect at home: “How has your Canadian symbol affected your view of Canada?” (See Lesson Plan #1 for details.)



**Lesson Plan #2—Exploring Political Maps**

For this lesson, I will first work from **indicator b)** by posting four sheets of poster paper on the chalkboard. They will read: “What is a country?”, “What is a province?”, “What is a territory?”, and “What is a capital city?”. If students are stuck or confused, I can ask prompting questions such as “What does Canada have that makes it a country?”, “What do each of the provinces/territories have in common?”, and “Why is a capital city so important?”. I will write down the answers and examples that students provide. After students have made connections to the four geopolitical constructs, I will give students a handout that provides them with four definitions of each.

**Indicator a)** will come into play when I show students the four geopolitical constructs on an enlarged political map that I display at the front of the classroom. I will point to the map’s boundaries that separate provinces and territories *within* the country, as well as indicate capital cities. Next, I will invite student teams of four (one at a time) to come to the front of the room and locate the provinces, territories, and capital cities that they see on the map. When they are finished, students will answer provided questions such as “What symbol does the map use to show capital cities?”, “Where are the territories located in Canada?”, “How many provinces are there in Canada?”, etc. While other students are waiting their turn, they will be encouraged to play an online game from <http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/resources/canada/map.html>. This game allows students to match provinces, territories, and capital cities on a political map of Canada.



**Lesson Plan #3—What about Physical Maps?**

The third lesson will be a continuation of **indicator a)**. I will begin by asking students what they remember about political maps: “What do political maps show and how do they show it?” Then, I will distribute a coloured *physical* map of Canada to each student. On the back of each map, the following three questions will already be written with enough space for students to answer: “How does this map look different from the political map?”, “What colours are used on this map and what do you think the colours are meant to show?”, and “What questions do you have about this map?”. I will give students ten to fifteen minutes to work independently and brainstorm possible answers. When students are ready to share their ideas with the class, I will highlight important information, answer students’ questions, and provide them with additional questions to promote inquiry. I will then emphasize the colours used on the physical maps even further, as well as any legends that are displayed (e.g. to show land relief).

For the remaining amount of time, I will introduce students to Google Earth. (I will need to have all equipment set up and book a computer as need be.) I will show students how to find Canada on the globe, to zoom in and out of locations, and to move across each province with the mouse. “How does Google Earth look like a political map?” and “How does Google Earth look like a physical map?” will be the two main questions that I pose to students. Students’ understanding of Google Earth will be essential for the next lesson.

[](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/e/e9/Google_Earth.svg)

**Lesson Plan #4—Using Google Earth to Locate Canadian Regions**

**Indicator c)** will form the basis of an in-class investigation that students will conduct in groups. More specifically, this lesson will invite students to utilize the GIS techniques (Google Earth) that were introduced the prior day. Before students head to the computer lab, I will introduce them to the six physical regions of Canada (Cordilleran Region, Interior Plains Region, Canadian Shield, St. Lawrence Lowlands, Appalachian Region, Innuitian Region), as well as their unique characteristics and physical landforms. Six student teams will be organized and invited to choose one of these regions out of a hat. In the computer lab, each team will work together as “detectives” to find their region on Google Earth. That is, they will use the characteristics or “clues” provided earlier to locate these regions. On a handout provided, each team will write down the province(s) and/or territory/ies that they think are affiliated with their chosen region, as well as five (or more) reasons *why* they chose these locations. Students will be encouraged to switch roles as “keyboardists” and “recorders”. (I will model basic Google Earth functions to those groups who need extra assistance.) Back in the classroom, students will share their findings with their classmates. Also, much of the discussion will be based on whether or not Canadians enjoy living in these regions.



**Lesson Plan #5—This is MY Country!**

This lesson will tie in both **indicators a) and c)**, as students will be given the opportunity to design their own country. To begin the lesson, I will ask students to stand in a circle and describe something that they learned from the Google Earth activity or from looking at physical maps in class. Every student will contribute one or more answers as they take turns. I will comment on students’ answers and probe any common themes that may arise. After students return to their desks, I will distribute a large white sheet of paper to every individual. Students will be required to create their own physical map of an imaginary country. I will outline my expectations of student work, and will distribute a rubric that outlines these expectations. Not only will this assignment allow students to apply mathematical and artistic components to their work, they will be given the opportunity to tie in their personal interests and perspectives to the country they create. For example, students of other cultures will be invited to apply personal cultural components to their country (e.g. to names and physical features). When there are about five or ten minutes left in the lesson (students will not be expected to finish), I will ask students, “Would you want to live in the country you created? Why or why not?” and “Which Canadian region do the characteristics of your country reflect?” (See Lesson Plan #5 for details.)



**Lesson Plan #6—Let’s Explore Population!**

Students will investigate the historical and current populations of Canadian regions, causing this lesson to fit **indicators c) and d)**. To begin my lesson, I will post enlarged images of land from each of the six regions in various areas in the classroom. I will ask students to visit each posted region and estimate how many people live there (just by looking at the photos). Students will not be asked to provide a number, but will write one of three responses: “high number”, “average number”, or “low number”. I will also ask students to write one reason for their response, and remind them of the characteristics (or landforms) that define each region (refer back to Lesson Plan #4). I will ask students to find a partner and compare answers. After about five minutes, each pair of students will be expected to find another pair to engage in more discussion. I will ask students to reason with and question one another, and politely challenge their classmates’ responses if they are different.

Using a variety of teacher-approved books, websites, and articles, the previously-assigned groups of four will now be responsible for researching the population trends for one of the six regions (historical and current population trends). Ultimately, students will realize that the population distribution changes as a result of geographic features, as well as other factors (e.g. immigration, disease, economy, etc.). Once students have a better understanding of the population changes for their region, they will share this information with the class.

[](http://images.google.ca/imgres?imgurl=http://www.edconsult.org/Portals/41331/images//Educational%20Consulting%20Trends-resized-600.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.edconsult.org/educational-consulting-blog/?Tag=residential%20treatment%20centers&usg=__IO5HVOLulKXTWGiG-oSm56MincM=&h=400&w=300&sz=78&hl=en&start=77&tbnid=owkE-UuuTOShuM:&tbnh=124&tbnw=93&prev=/images?q=population+trends+kids&gbv=2&ndsp=20&hl=en&sa=N&start=60)

**Lesson Plan #7—Tying it All Together…**

This last lesson of the unit will allow students to apply their new knowledge of population to the imaginary countries that were created earlier. Also, students will connect everything that they have learned throughout the unit, and reflect on how this information has changed their initial views of Canada. (**All indicators** will be taken into consideration.) Since students should have completed their imaginary countries by the time this lesson begins, they will receive a classmate’s country to analyze. I will ask students to observe the geographic features of their classmate’s imaginary country and to write an eight-to-ten sentence story about the population patterns that could result here. Even though students’ stories will be fictional, I will ask for them to apply the knowledge that they gained from the previous lesson.

As a means of summarizing the entire unit, I will ask students to portray their new view of Canada in an artistic fashion. For example, students may colour a picture, or perform a dance or drama. I will remind students of everything we have covered throughout this unit: Canadian symbols, constructs and boundaries, mapping, landforms and regions, and population patterns. In other words, “How have these element(s) affected how you see Canada? Are your thoughts similar or different to the views you had in the first lesson?”

